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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examined how college students majoring in Studio Art perceived their undergraduate educational experiences and the impact of this education on their post-college plans. Data were gathered through written questionnaires completed by 22 students, in-depth interviews with 6 students, and on-site participant observation. Findings included the following: (1) respondents seemed very dedicated to art and creating art was the primary focus of their educational experience; (2) most did not take any job-related courses; (3) female students were less committed to continuing art, had less confidence in their art career skills, and had more diverse and demanding interest outside art; (4) most were pleased with their art courses; (5) most students were expecting to have a very difficult time after graduation and expected to support themselves primarily in low-paying, "menial jobs"; (6) students tended to rely on art faculty for individual career guidance; (7) many students were planning to attend graduate school in art; and (8) none of the students had used the college's career services center. (Contains 22 references.) (JB)

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"CAREER PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE ART STUDENTS: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY"

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Abstract

This paper describes a study that investigated how students majoring in Studio Art perceived their undergraduate educational experiences and what connections they saw between their matriculation and plans for the future. Since there had been little research on 15,000 college students annually completing bachelor's degrees in Studio Art, there was a need for this qualitative case study.

Data were gathered through written questionnaires from 22 students, in-depth interviews with six of them, and on-site participant observation. The data from various sources were integrated and analyzed into relevant categories, such as importance of artwork, financial considerations, and expectations for the future.

Although some of the Studio Art students expected college to prepare them for a better job, the majority estimated that their earnings after graduation would be near or well below the "poverty level." Many described their plans to support themselves with terms like "menial jobs" and "anything that won't degrade myself." When asked about connections between their five years in college and plans for the future, they said college was preparing them to create artwork, go to graduate school, and to teach art. One responded, "School helps instill the work ethic and being a student helps prepare for poverty."

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Introduction

Since 1970 a college degree has not been the guarantee to a good job that it once was. In fact, the numbers of college graduates entering the labor force now far exceed job openings, with many graduates experiencing either unemployment or under-employment in a job that did not require a college degree. The difficulty of finding suitable employment after graduation may be especially true of graduates majoring in Studio Art, where the primary course emphasis is on creating high quality artwork rather than preparing for a job. A survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics showed that one year after graduation from twenty different areas surveyed (including Nursing, Math, History, etc.), the graduates in Art were least likely to be holding a professional position (Hecker, 1982).

Although very little research has been done about college Art students, recent national statistics showed that over 15,000 bachelor's degrees were awarded annually in areas of Studio Art (Brown). Thus, although the number of students majoring in Studio Art may be rather small at each institution, when viewed on the national level this population represents a sizable number of workers entering the labor force every year.

It is generally recognized that the typical artist today has been educated in a university (Rosenberg, 1973), and that state colleges and universities are definitely an important force in the training of professional artists. In fact, more than 10,000 of the 15,000 bachelor's degrees were awarded by publicly supported colleges and universities. But except for a few rare studies (Whitesel, 1977; Adams and Kowalski, 1980), most of the sparse research about Art students has been conducted with students at professional schools of art (Strauss, 1970; Griff, 1970; Barron, 1972; Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi, 1964). It is interesting to note that while the independent schools of art, such as the Art Institute of Chicago, were the sites for most of the earlier research studies, they are now also the sites for most of the art career development programs (Geahigan, 1981).

An important point emphasized by researchers conducting studies of Art students and artists is that in the beginning professional artists must have some employment other than their artwork in order to survive financially no matter how much they would prefer to work solely at their art. They often hold a series of low level, unskilled jobs in order to earn a living. (Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi ,1976; Hendricks, pg. 69; Reuter, 1974). While most graduating college students are faced with the choice between two options: seeking employment or seeking admittance to a graduate or professional school (Bachhuber, 1977), Studio Art students are generally faced with choosing from three options: seeking a job, seeking admittance to a graduate or professional school, and seeking to become a practicing, professional fine artist. And in reality, they often must do two, and sometimes all three, as they attempt to become a professional artist; continue higher studies in art; and seek a "survival " or "day" job to support themselves. Therefore, the career development process may be more complex for Studio Art students than for students in many other majors.

Although the career development tasks of college Fine Art students can be very complex, apparently very little research has been done in this area. This scarcity of research may have been partly due to the previous tendency to think that the occupational world of artists was not comparable to other fields, although research has shown that the nature of artistic careers is essentially the same as careers found in other fields (Hendricks). Since there had been little research on Studio Art students, there was a need for this qualitative case study about juniors and seniors majoring in Studio Art.

Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of this qualitative case study was to answer two basic research questions: (1) How did these undergraduates majoring in Studio Art perceive their educational experiences? (2) What connections did they see between their college

matriculation and their plans for the future? Information was sought about important factors relating to their undergraduate experience including career choices and perceptions of jobs available, choice of art and non-art elective courses, jobs held during undergraduate preparation, previous training in another fields, and advising and support as provided in various ways.

Methods

Since qualitative research is especially appropriate for obtaining the "insider perspective," a naturalistic, qualitative design was chosen for this study of the undergraduate experiences and personal career attitudes of art students. Data were gathered through participant observation at the site, a written survey which included open-ended questions, and semi-structured in-depth interviews.

The population for the study was all Studio Art students (majoring in Painting, Drawing, Watercolor, Printmaking, Ceramics, Sculpture, and Inter-Areas) who had passed a Portfolio Review in order to enroll in upper division Art courses at that time. Survey questionnaires were given to as many of the population as could be located during Spring 1991. Twenty-two of those students filled out the surveys and returned them. The questionnaires gathered information on demographics, as well as about their college life, economics, artwork, and plans for the future. Also the survey was a way of making initial contact with the participants.

Participant observation revealed that locations that were important to the Studio Art students included various parts of the Art Building such as the classrooms, the studios, the University Art Gallery, and the bulletin boards. In addition, the student Art Gallery at a downtown location a couple of miles away was extremely important to this population. Events that were important included individual Portfolio reviews, class group artwork critiques, art show

"Openings" (receptions), the annual Student Art Competition, and the annual "Honors" competition for Art seniors.

From among the 22 respondents who had completed questionnaires, I chose to interview six informants. Each semi-structured interview lasted about one hour and was conducted in a location convenient for the student. The interviews were audio-taped and carefully transcribed for analysis. In addition to individual themes, those data were analyzed across the interviews into categories, describing such aspects as their relationships with professors, the importance of their artwork, and their expectations for the future.

The data from various sources (observation, the written questionnaires, and the in-depth interviews) were integrated, analyzed, and organized into themes about personal, educational, Art career, and financial factors.

Participants in the Study

At the time the questionnaires were completed in April 1991, the age range among the twenty-two informants was from 20 years to 38 years old, with most of the students being between 20 and 23 years old. There were sixteen females and six males. While 18 of the respondents were single, four of the females were married.

Expected graduation dates ranged from 1991 to 1994, with most expecting to graduate some time in 1992. All of the informants were working on a Bachelor of Fine Art (B.F.A.) degree. There were 18 majoring solely in Art, with four doing a double major in Art and Art Education (in the College of Education.) For Area of Concentration in Art, there were six in Ceramics, five in Painting, three in Drawing, with the rest in Printmaking, Watercolor, and combinations of areas. Although Sculpture was also an Area of Concentration, inexplicably no student majoring in that Area completed a questionnaire.

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Results

The findings will be presented by describing the perceptions of the respondents regarding (1) their undergraduate educational experiences, (2) their future plans and expectations, and (3) the connections between their matriculation and their future.

Perceptions of Undergraduate Educational Experiences

Although respondents were complimentary about the high quality of their Art training, most of the 22 respondents (91%) had chosen to attend this university rather than another college or school because of proximity to their home and/or the economical in-state tuition. The two other respondents said that their parents were paying for their schooling and their parents had insisted on this institution, with proximity and economy probably being factors also. Although one respondent said he would have attended a professional Art school if he could have afforded it, several were definitely in favor of a Liberal Arts education. A couple of respondents wrote that having a creative satisfying life was more important than concentrating on one discipline. One informant felt that attending a university instead of a professional Art school strengthened her as an artist, by providing contact with students in many fields.

The participants seemed to be from middle-class families. Most of the respondents were working part-time while attending college and most of them had several sources of financial support. Thirteen of them were receiving financial support from their parents, while four listed parents as their sole means of support. One informant mentioned that his parents had wanted him to major in Business in order to prepare to earn a good living.

While the primary goal for that Art Department was to make the students into the best artists possible without regard to employment, 41% of the respondents said that one of their reasons for attending college was to get a better job after graduation. General "learning or knowledge" was part of the motivation for 45% of the respondents. Earning a degree was a

personal motivation for 36% of the respondents listed, and 36% mentioned attending college for the sake of the Art training.

Perceptions of Art

At least one third of the 22 respondents had chosen Art after trying a previous college major or previous career. From the interviews, it seems that the informants' reasons for choosing to major in Studio Art were more avocational than vocational. Most of the six informants said that their decision to major in Art was the result of a lifelong interest or desire to study Art, in addition to their enjoyment of Art, as well as their success in Art classes. They decided to major in Art because it was something they enjoyed doing. "It was something I've wanted to do all my life." "I've always been interested in Art . . . and I wanted to do something that I would enjoy."

Art was extremely important to the respondents. Some said Art was the most important thing in their life. Their reasons for creating artwork included communicating a message or having some social impact, getting responses from an audience, enjoyment of working with the medium, and creating a piece of Art which had a life of its own. Individual authorship of the artworks was important, although some teamwork was involved in the process of creating ceramics and prints.

While the works in Ceramics were more traditional and functional, most of the two-dimensional artworks created by the 22 respondents were innovative, with the emphasis on creativity, message, individual style, or experimentation rather than on visual representation or attractiveness. Some of the work was "non-objective" with no representation of recognizable images. Snapshots that I took of artworks by the informants which were included in various exhibits revealed that most of the students worked in styles more modern than traditional. At the time they completed the survey in April 1991, most of the respondents had sold very little artwork; 17 of them had sold $500 or less. And in fact, much of the artwork created

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by this population would probably appeal only to a rather elite audience. One informant said she was "a little bit shocked" to learn how "uninformed" the general public was about this type of innovative artwork.

Some of the respondents were forming good work habits in Art. Five of the 22 respondents (23%) were spending 40 or more hours per week at their artwork, including half of the males but only one-eighth of the females. Another 5 (23%) of the respondents were spending between 30 and 40 hours per week. Some informants had to juggle deadlines and activities in order to get everything done and a couple of them tended to over-schedule themselves with diverse interests and activities that they perceived important.

Perceptions About Other Art People

Friendship pairs composed of two Studio Art students who were very close friends were important. A close Art friend seemed particularly important to discuss Art problems with, to work with, and as someone to cooperate in joint exhibits, such as at the downtown gallery. While efforts in some Areas were primarily individual, there was more of a sense of "community" in Printmaking, with the students helping each other, sharing ideas and opinions, and working together with the same goals. Some teamwork was necessary in courses in Ceramics also.

Among the 22 respondents there was a heavy reliance on other Art people for career advice or assistance. When asked which people they discussed their future plans with or went to for advice or help, the three highest categories marked by the respondents were other student(s) majoring in Art (86%), Art professors (86%), and graduates of the Art Department (77%). Although ten respondents indicated they would like help writing a resume, none of them had ever gone to talk to advisors in the office of Career Planning and Placement, where there were workshops, handouts, and a critiquing service available to help university students write their resumes.

Needed Program Improvements As Seen By The Informants

Several informants described changes they would like to see the Art Department make that would help better prepare Studio Art students for their future. One informant wished for a course in economics or money management specially designed for arts majors. He also commented that it was a problem for each student to have to get all Art career advice individually from the Art professors. Instead, he thought there should be a practical career-oriented course that informed students about what they could do with a major in Art and how to prepare for that.

Another informant felt that the Art Department should be providing more career guidance, saying,

> I really love the Art Department. I think they're a really strong, great department. But nobody ever tells us what we can do after we graduate. What do you do with a degree in Art? . . . The Art Department is concerned with doing – with making Art, and critiques and so forth. But I really think they should have something there in the department office that told you what jobs are available and what you can do with your degree after you graduate.

Another informant perceived that a course in Museology was extremely important for Studio Art students. Although a couple of the 22 respondents were interested in working in Art museums, apparently most Art students perceived it a burden to have to take the first introductory Museology course which was a prerequisite for the applications course. The one informant who had taken the courses suggested that the applications course be set up without a prerequisite and required of all Studio Art majors since it was so relevant to Studio Art and so helpful in learning Art career skills.

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Future Goals and Expectations

Although some respondents did not have any clear long-term plans and wanted to keep all of their options open, many did have definite long-term goals. However, many of them seemed unsure about the means to achieve their goals, since achieving them depended greatly on circumstances and on other people.

Their responses often indicated multiple goals, and often their Art career goals involved some Art-related way to support themselves such as teaching or museum work. Their answers about what they were most likely to do indicated a variety of activities or a somewhat complex career path – to work and to do artwork equally; to take a non-art related job while trying to get into Graduate School; or to take a full-time job unrelated to Art and work while going to Graduate School in order to be able eventually to teach.

Job Plans and Financial Expectations

The informants described many of their past job experiences as negative ones, thus narrowing rather than broadening their job options. Although most of them felt capable of finding jobs, generally the ones that they were able to find were rather low level jobs that they really did not want to work at long-term. To the informants, "work" means their artwork.

When asked what options they would consider after graduation, 77% said they would consider working at a full-time Art-related job (which is sometimes hard to find) but only 32% indicated they would consider a full-time job not related to Art as an option. But 55% did say they would consider working at a part-time job not related to Art and working part-time on their artwork. One informant was already having a mental struggle between what she preferred and what seemed most practical – she needed to earn money but she wished she could just work on Art. Most of them (86%) said they would be willing and able to relocate in the near future if necessary for work, study, or Art opportunities.

All six informants interviewed mentioned money as a consideration in their plans – either what they could do to make a living or how to afford to go to Graduate School. One mentioned that he would have to attend Graduate School wherever he could get an Assistantship. One was considering teaching for a while to save enough money for Graduate School. The informant who had been rejected by all the Graduate Schools where she had applied was reassessing her goals and priorities as she began looking for a local job.

When asked to estimate costs of living and income for the first couple of years after graduation, nine respondents (41%) estimated that living costs would be more than their income, while seven respondents (32%) estimated that their income would equal their costs of living. Only one respondent (5%) estimated that income would be more than costs.

According to the local State Department of Human Services, the current "Poverty Level" Income at the time of this study was $718 per month ($8616 per year) for a one-person household and $962 per month ($11,544 per year) for a two-person household. Only seven respondents (32%) estimated that their income would be substantially over the single Poverty Level. Another four respondents (18%) estimated their income would be close to or slightly over the Poverty Level, while 9 (41%) estimated their income would be substantially under it. A total of 14 (64%) estimated future income under $10,000.

As a group, the male respondents estimated lower earnings, with none marking over $10,000, while seven of the female respondents (44%) estimated over $10,000. But only three estimated income over $15,000, and no respondents marked the income category "Over $20,000."

When asked about substantial training or education in a field other than Art, ten of the respondents (45%) said they would not mind working in a specific field where they had training or education. And three respondents (14%) said they were currently working in their Alternate Area of Expertise, such as Music and outdoor adventure sports. Only eight respondents (36%) indicated that they had taken any job-related college courses. The respondents

described their plans to support themselves with terms such as "odd jobs," "menial jobs," "any-thing that won't degrade myself," and any work "that pays a half-way decent wage."

Future Art Plans

The respondents seemed to have a high "durability of commitment" to Art, which was defined in the literature as the interest artists have in continuing to create artworks (Whitesel, 1974). When the respondents were asked how important it was for them personally to continue creating artworks after graduation (durability of commitment), 82% indicated that it was very important to them to continue to express themselves through Art, to create at some level, and to grow as an artist. One respondent said, "Making Art has become the center of my life. I expect that to continue." One female respondent commented that her continuing to create would depend on having an adequate studio space somewhere. This was probably even more important for majors in Printmaking and Ceramics who had had access to highly specialized equipment and facilities during their matriculation.

The respondents had a fairly low "sociability of commitment," which was defined in the literature as the interest artists have in having a public response to their artwork, either a general viewing public or a group of artist-peers (Whitesel, 1974). When asked how important it was to eventually earn recognition for their Art, only 32% of these respondents indicated that it was "very important" to earn recognition. Another 23% said it was "important but" if necessary they would be an artist in isolation. And 41% said that it was "not very important" to gain recognition. And two males majoring in Ceramics implied that being able to sell their Art was more important than gaining recognition.

However, it is possible that more respondents were committed to showing their artwork than were committed to earning a big reputation in Art. One informant said that she was more interested in having her work touch many people in the general public than in earning a reputation in the elitist Art world. Another informant said he envisioned an even balance

between creating artworks, earning a reputation in order in order to spread his ideas, and being an Art professor who could help college Art students.

Graduate School Plans

Many of the respondents (73%) indicated they might consider going to Graduate School – most for a Master of Fine Art (M.F.A.) in Studio Art but a few in Art Education or Graphic Design. But only 45% indicated specifically that they felt it was likely they would go to Graduate School. It seems that teaching might have been a career that was more desirable for its compatibility with their aspirations in Art than for its own worth. One informant said, "And now – I want to teach. But if I could just paint, that's what I'd do, in a heartbeat."

All of the six informants who were interviewed were hoping to go to Graduate School. Two mentioned that they felt their undergraduate education best prepared them for Graduate School. At the time of this writing, there was no official way for graduates from this Art department to do a Master's degree at this university with a major in Studio Art or Art Education.

The informants knew that there would be stiff competition for M.F.A. slots in other states, and there was no guarantee that they could get accepted. So although they could decide where they preferred to study, in reality they would go wherever they were accepted (and possibly where they could get an Assistantship). One mentioned that even after completing an M.F.A., the employment prospects still might not be good. She commented that it was easier for people not to think about the job market until they had to face trying to enter it.

Social Goals

A number of the respondents expressed interest in teaching Art in public schools or in college – an occupation which is as much social as artistic. And of all the six informants interviewed had goals for helping or educating people in some way. One informant who was

interested in public artwork or Art with a social message wanted to work in a museum or gallery. The other five informants wanted to teach Art at some level.

Perceived Connections Between College Matriculation and Future Plans

When the respondents were asked what connections they saw between their matriculation and their plans for the future, some of their written responses were introspective and deep, but many of them were rather superficial, and two were left blank. Perhaps this indicated that they really had not thought specifically about such connections in this way before. An analysis of the responses indicated the following categories:

Connection: Continuing Art and Teaching Art

The connection most commonly mentioned by the respondents was that they were being prepared for continuing to create artwork (41%). This was perceived as important since 82% thought it was very important for them to continue creating Art after graduation. The connection of matriculation with future teaching or other Art-related jobs such as museum work was mentioned by 18% of the respondents.

Connection: Going to Graduate School

The connection with going to Graduate School was mentioned by 23% of the respondents. The six informants all mentioned wanting to go on to Graduate School in Art. One informant said she had learned to be able to talk about her work, and to be able to produce consistent work, and to have ideas that were at the graduate level. The informants also mentioned learning about the process of getting into a good Graduate School, building a good portfolio in order to get admitted, and gaining the range of technical Art skills needed "to secure a teaching assistantship to help pay for Graduate School."

Connection: Habits, Skills, and Patterns Learned

Another 23% of the respondents, either directly or indirectly, implied that they had developed habits, skills, and patterns that would help them in the future. One informant indicated that she had developed the essential habit of "lifelong learning." Another informant in particular had exercised a great amount of persistence and patience, juggling her multiple priorities and getting everything done. One respondent wrote that the skills learned while obtaining a B.F.A. were not particularly important, but the habits of work and thought were of paramount importance. Tongue-in-cheek, another respondent wrote, "School helps instill the work ethic and being a student helps prepare for poverty." Still another wrote,

> The classes. . . are also helping me to think about various issues of world and national importance, and to think for myself, and to understand myself much more than I have in the past. All of this is important for me in making me more flexible in taking on new jobs and trying things that I never would have considered before.

Two respondents compared their approach to Art with their approach to life. One wrote, "I hope my Art continues to develop – I see it like life - . ` . ` . -. I have a hard time seeing life in definite stages." About connections of the present and the future, one informant said, "Oh, it's like my paintings, you put down a layer and another layer, and eventually you're going to get there. That's the way life is: just keep going."

Skills Still Needed for Future Plans

Several informants mentioned practical job-related skills that they thought they still needed to learn and doubted they would have learned before graduation. One mentioned needing money management skills. An informant who might be teaching Art in public schools said that she did not think she would have all the needed skills by graduation because she saw teaching as requiring "political" skills. The informant who was graduating but had not been accepted into a Graduate School was reassessing her practical job skills and

thought she needed "to be able to run a computer and things like that." She said, "I suspect I have learned a certain amount of persistence and discipline but no direct job skills."

Conclusions and Implications of the Study

This case study was definitely not about all Junior and Senior Studio Art students. It is only about the 22 respondents who chose to complete the survey and turn it in, with more detailed information about the six informants who were interviewed in depth. It appears that the respondents were the Studio Art students who had social values that were high enough for them to want to cooperate and communicate and economic values that were high enough for them to be willing to think about their future finances.

The literature showed that Art students tended to have values systems and personality traits that might make working at certain jobs more difficult (Getzels et al, 1976). Examples that were mentioned by the informants in this study were not liking a job that involved a boring routine or not liking to be a "pushy salesperson." Although some had already had negative job experiences, their responses indicated that many of them would try to support themselves after graduation with whatever "odd jobs" they could find. The problem with taking any jobs available without analyzing and choosing carefully is that they might risk getting more disillusioned by trying to do jobs for which they are unsuited in personality and values.

It is important for all people to learn to understand their personality traits and learn to compare those to what is needed for particular jobs before they attempt them. A good example of this is the fact that a high percentage of the respondents in this study were thinking of teaching Art to support themselves. It was likely that they had only considered liking Art and liking people and may not have considered which personality factors are needed for success in teaching. Extroverted teachers are energized by being with people and still have energy left over for other pursuits at the end of the day. However, Studio Art students in

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general are inclined to be rather introverted, at least to some degree. If they happen to be strongly introverted, many hours of contact with numerous students during the school day may be an almost unbearably draining experience. For anyone planning teaching as a career, this is an important aspect which should be considered, but seldom is. The informant who said it would be "quite fun" to teach Art all day and then go home and do Art at night had obviously not tried that yet.

The respondents seemed very dedicated to Art; some said it was the most important thing in their life. It appeared that creating artworks was the primary focus of their educational experience. Ten of them (45%) were spending more than 30 hours per week creating artworks. The traditional tendency in institutions of Art training has been to stress the quality of the artwork produced while neglecting essential survival information (Whitesel, 1980). Since Art was the major focus of the respondents in this study, most of them did not take any job-related courses unless those courses were also Art-related.

More than twice as many females as males (16 to 6) participated in this study. From the non-participants who could be identified, that ratio appeared to hold fairly true for the rest of the population also. A few gender differences did appear in the data. In general, the female respondents had less commitment to continuing Art, less confidence in their Art career skills, more diverse and demanding interests outside of Art, were spending fewer hours each week doing artwork, and were less likely to already have a satisfactory job they could continue after graduation, while they estimated a higher rate of income after graduation.

In general, the respondents were very complimentary about the quality of their Studio Art courses. They felt that they were well prepared to continue creating artworks. Although most of them did not consider earning recognition for their artwork to be very important, most (82%) thought it was very important to continue creating Art after graduation. Some also felt they were well prepared to get accepted into M.F.A. programs, and 73% were considering going on to Graduate School. Many felt that their undergraduate experiences were

specifically preparing them to be Graduate Art students. This created a puzzling obstacle for many since they could not be accepted into the M.F.A. program at this university.

At this university, the B.F.A. degree in Art generally required five years of college work. Tuition was rising steadily almost every year at this time, and Art materials and supplies were very expensive. These 22 respondents were apparently not from wealthy families. Most had chosen to attend this institution partly because it was close to home and relatively economical. Many of them were working at part-time or summer jobs to help pay their expenses. Some of them (41%) said one of their reasons for attending college was to get a better job after graduation.

Traditionally, Art training institutions have served to socialize the students into the role of the artist, teaching them to value "marginality" and even to expect to have low incomes (Field) rather than teaching them to prosper. Accordingly, after all the expense and time the respondents had invested in their education, many of them were expecting to have a very difficult time after graduation. Half of them were expecting to support themselves through "menial jobs," "odd jobs," "anything that won't degrade" themselves, or "anything that pays a half-way decent wage." For the first couple of years after graduation, at least 41% of them were expecting their income to be substantially less than the current "Poverty Level" and only 32% estimated that their income would be substantially above it. Only one respondent estimated income would be more than the costs of living for that period. So in that sense, the respondents were spending five long expensive years preparing for Poverty.

There was a tendency for the respondents to rely heavily on Art faculty for career guidance. In addition, such career guidance was received not as a group but individually in critiques and advising sessions with Art professors one-on-one. The quality of the guidance depended greatly on student / professor rapport and the individual career knowledge of every Art professor acting as advisors. The advisement described by the informants seemed

to relate primarily to going to Graduate School. Since the Art professors worked most closely with the students, it appeared that they were the key to a better advisement system.

One informant commented that the system of having each student seek career guidance individually from the professors was ineffective and suggested that the Art Department should have a career-oriented class to tell Art students about what they could do with a major in Art and how to prepare for that. Another informant said that nobody in the Art Department ever told them what they could do after they graduated; she thought that, "they should have something there in the department office that told you what jobs are available and what you can do with your degree after you graduate." It appears that the best way for the respondents to receive career guidance would be within the Art Department, with both a career-oriented class and some sort of collection of Art career materials available in the AA Building, where the respondents spend so much of their time for five years.

It was beneficial that the Art Department had allowed students to prepare for an Alternate Area of Expertise by structuring the program so that many job-related courses could be substituted for Studio electives. However, it did not appear that the Department had encouraged students to do this. The main emphasis in the setting was on Art. And all the types of recognition important to the students were judged primarily on the quality of artwork only. There were simply no immediate Art rewards for taking job-related classes. The respondent who had taken practical courses in Museology and Graphic Design had done so on her own initiative and had gone to great lengths to fit the courses into her program of study. In general, the respondents were focused very strongly and almost single-mindedly on their work in Studio Art.

The policy in this Art Department at the time of this study was that the responsibility of the faculty was to help the students become the best artists possible – "good enough to make it in New York if they wanted to move there" – not to worry about whether they could find a job after graduation. But, the literature mentioned that each year only about 5% of the new

arrivals in the Art district of New York City could expect to succeed (Simpson). The literature showed that studio artists need good business and marketing skills in order to actually get paid for being an artist (Caplin). Their survival also requires good social and political skills, which may even be in conflict with their value systems. In fact, becoming successful as an artist may have little to do with artistic talents (Getzels et al., 1976). And, it appeared that the respondents were not being equipped with all skills needed in New York since most (82%) indicated that they needed help in learning business and marketing skills that were essential for Studio Artists. It is important to remember that it is difficult for even great artists to create if they are in dire financial straits and stressed out over financial factors.

Because of their heavy reliance on Art people for advice and support, the respondents might have been unaware of any resources available to help them outside of the Art Department. For example, none of the respondents had gone into the campus Career Services (C.S.) Center for help. At the time of this study, one informant who was wishing specifically for someone to help her was not even aware of the existence of the Career Services facility. Apparently it was possible to take courses on this campus for many years without being aware of the C.S. Center. This seems to imply that a more creative marketing program for C.S. could help. (The services at the Career Services Center are also available free of charge to all alumni after graduation.)

Although it was probable that Art students also needed technical Art career assistance not available at Career Services, there were some features of that facility which could definitely help them. One example was the assistance available for students in writing resumes; 45% of these respondents said that they needed help writing resumes. Another example was availability of career information. C.S. had complied an informative handout entitled, "What You Can Do With A Major in Art" which was available in abundance at the C.S. Center – where Studio Art students never went.

Thus, it appears that parts of the university career advising system do not work very well together. Apparently faculty advisors in the Art Department do not send their advisees for outside help. And professionals in career advising apparently are using the usual forms of marketing without considering whether or not the information will reach the targeted audience. This seems to imply that some sort of "outreach" program for C.S. would help. And since Art professors seemed to be primarily responsible for the career advising of Studio Art students, perhaps there might be some way that C.S. could work with the Art professors to create a better system.

Also, professionals in Studio Art must have some steady source of employment other than Art (Hendricks; Getzels et al., 1976). But often instead of cultivating an Alternate Area of Expertise where they can be paid well for their time, artists resort to menial, low-paying jobs (Reuter). Studies have shown that chronic disturbances of various types can impair creativity and production of creative Art (Fried; Hatterer), and these disturbances can include financial problems and stresses as well as problems in personal relationships.

Traditionally college Art graduates have had trouble finding good jobs; one study showed that only 45% of those employed a few years after graduation were working at jobs that generally required a college degree (Hecker). Typically Art students came from middle class families who generally helped support them through college but could not support them indefinitely (Strauss; Simpson). Research has shown that while in college Studio Art students need more career counseling and career information than they have traditionally received (Gatlin; Whitesel, 1980). The professional schools of Art may recognize the financial and career needs of graduates since many of them have offices where students can obtain career counseling and placement assistance, while very few state universities have established such Art career advising centers.

However, for many years the typical American artist has been educated at at universities, not at the professional schools of Art (Rosenberg, 1973). Each year about two-thirds of

the total of approximately 15,000 graduates in Studio Art have been educated at publicly-supported colleges or universities, compared to about 1,500 Studio Art graduates from the professional schools of Art (Brown). The middle-class status of Art students, with limited college funds and strong parental ties, may be a very important factor in their decision to attend an economical, near-by state-supported university. At any rate, it appears that the Studio Art students at state supported colleges and universities are just as committed to their Art as students at the professional Art schools (Whitesel, 1974). Since the typical American artist of today is educated at a state university or college, that seems to be a logical place for them to acquire the business skills necessary to surviving as an artist. Also good skills in job-hunting would help them make use of the bachelor's degree they have worked to complete.

Therefore, all faculty and administrators in university Art departments must realize that their responsibility lies in creating whole functioning artists who are prepared not only to continue to create Art after graduation but also to somehow support themselves financially. It is important to remember that these future artists will have financial and personal needs, as well as educational and Art career needs.

In the broadest sense of the term, career development means preparing for an effective and satisfying life, not simply preparing for earning a living. Thus, every human being has a career, whether that career is planned, effective, and satisfying, or just haphazard and unhappy. And conversely, liberal preparation for life could also include preparation for satisfying lucrative work instead of just a life of poverty and sacrifice.

It might be argued that university Art departments do not prevent their students from preparing for their financial future. But that is not good enough. Undergraduate students do not always have the wisdom to know what knowledge and skills they are going to need after graduation. Obviously, that is one reason there are required programs of study in colleges and universities. Therefore, needed programs in Art career information and counseling should be provided and integrated into the required Studio Art curriculum. This is extremely

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important for the future of Art and for the future of thousands of dedicated Studio Art students, whose artistic skills may be totally wasted after graduation without adequate skills to cope with their future financial needs.

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